166. Difficulties experienced by the depressed classes in getting puduval and poramboke lands registered and in securing appointments in public service and the grant of concessions to them by the Government with special reference to Sambavars.

MR. N. M. MARKOSE (*Nominated*) : said that the major portion of the available land in the State was in the ownership or possession of two or three communities. A large portion of the land was classified as *porambokes*, grazing lands, reserved lands, etc. The extent of land assigned to the depressed classes was very small. While their population was over a million, the extent of land assigned so far was only 6,000 acres. The Government have issued a circular that 20 per cent. of the disafforested lands should be set apart for assignment to the depressed classes. This was not sufficient. They should be given the lands they applied for from the disafforested areas. The depressed classes were mainly agriculturists but they had no wet lands of their own. All the swampy areas disafforested from reserves should therefore be assigned to them. Most of the reserved forest lands were unprofitable. These lands should be disafforested and assigned to them. The Government have assigned large extents of lands to the Kanikars. But most of these were alienated by them to others. It would therefore be well if the required extent of land be assigned to the Kanikars and the balance assigned to the depressed classes.

The lands assigned to the missionaries for the benefit of the depressed classes were really of no use to the latter. This would be evident from an enquiry. A Regulation should therefore be passed in order to ensure the occupancy right of the depressed classes to the lands assigned on their behalf to the missionaries.

The lands assigned on concessional terms to the depressed classes were alienated in favour of the members of other communities. The rules against alienation of such lands were inoperative and very often not observed. Stringent measures should be adpoted to prevent such alienations.

The subordinates of the Revenue Department were generally against the assignment of lands to depressed classes. There was no officer to look after the interests of the depressed classes except a part-time Protector of the Depressed Classes on an allowance of Rs. 50. In order to redress the grievances of the depressed classes and protect their interests, a full-time Protector should be appointed as in Cochin.

The member next urged the need for making appointments on a communal basis. In classifying the Christians for this purpose, those who do not intermarry or interdine should be considered as separate communities, as among the Hindus. The depressed classes found it difficult to secure footing in Government service. Whenever they applied for places, they were told that there were others who had acted already and without employment. Stringent orders should be issued to heads of departments to give preference to applicants of depressed classes over acting hands in the waiting lists.

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DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Markose, *puduval* lands have been set apart solely for the depressed classes for registry. Twenty per cent. of the disafforested swampy areas are reserved for the depressed classes; and, in occasional cases, lands outside these areas are given to them. The main point is to ask for lands which are available and not for lands which it is impossible to give. The latter happens very often.

The need for a full-time Protector of Depressed Classes has been recognised; but, the scheme has to lie over because of the present financial stringency.

The depressed classes are given appointments in the several departments; and the heads of departments, have been told that, when qualified hands apply, available places must be given to them.

167. Muslims and public service.

MR. K. A. HYDROSE (*Municipal Council, Alwaye*) said that the cry for representation of Muslims in the public service was not merely for the sake of earning their livelihood but also for the sake of occupying positions of trust and responsibility and thereby exercising their rights of citizenship. There were rich merchants and industrialists and land-owners among the Muslims. Many of them paid a large amount of income tax also. But the members of the community were not duly represented in service. The Government should remove this disability by adopting the necessary measures at an early date. In particular the member requested that in the vacancies of District Judges occurring in the near future Muslims might be appointed. There were several cases involving questions of Mahomedan law which required an intimate knowledge of the *Koran*. Such cases were being disposed of by those who had no such knowledge. Hence the need for Muslim Judges.

Muslims should also be appointed in all ranks in the Secretariat This was necessary because it was the clerks of the Secretariat and the Account Office who were recruited as Magistrates who in their turn were promoted as Tahsildars, Division Assistants and Peishkars. There was only one Muslim in the above cadres as an acting Tahsildar. The policy of making appointments in the Secretariat should be modified accordingly. Further, several questions affecting the Muslim community were coming up for decision in the Secretariat. For a proper understanding of these questions and their decision, a Muslim Officer was necessary. A Muslim should therefore be appointed in the higher ranks of the Secretariat.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Hydrose, when the vacancy of a District Judge occurs, the claims of your community will be considered if a qualified hand is available.

Muslims are being appointed in all departments and also in the Secretariat. They have equal opportunities with the members of other communities for being appointed to any vacancy.

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